

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 REYKJA 00126 270341Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15
/055 W
-----044302 272136Z /62
R 261035Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8079
INFO COMICEDEFOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE REYKJAVIK 0126

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IC
SUBJECT: PROGRESSIVE PARTY PRIMARY RESULTS: LAST HURRAH FOR
THORARIN THORARINSSON?

REF: (A) 77 REYKJAVIK 1810; (B) 77 REYKJAVIK 1680; (C) 77
REYKJAVIK 1647

1. SUMMARY: ICELAND'S SECOND LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY, PRO-
GRESSIVE PARTY (PP), HELD ITS REYKJAVIK PRIMARIES FOR ALTHING
(NATIONAL PARLIAMENT) AND CITY COUNCIL SEATS ON JANUARY 21
AND 22 WITH SOME SURPRISE RESULTS. AFTER 20 YEARS IN
ALTHING ONE OF PARTY'S "GRAND OLD MEN" THORARIN THORARINSSON,
HEAD OF PP PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION AND EDITOR OF PP DAILY
TIMINN, SLIPPED TO THIRD PLACE ON PARTY SLATE FOR REYKJAVIK
PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY, THEREBY VIRTUALLY PRECLUDING
HIS RETURN TO PARLIAMENT IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS LATER
THIS SPRING. (PP, EVEN IN BEST OF TIMES, HAS BEEN ABLE
TO ELECT ONLY TWO PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM REYKJAVIK.)
FOREIGN MINISTER EINAR AGUSTSSON MADE VERY STRONG
SHOWING AND EASILY PICKED UP FIRST PLACE ON PARLIAMENTARY
LIST WHILE POLITICAL NEWCOMER GUDMUNDUR THORARINSSON WALKED
AWAY WITH SECOND PLACE. IN PP CITY COUNCIL PRIMARY, INCUMBENT
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 REYKJA 00126 270341Z

ALFRED THORSTEINSSON DROPPED TO SIXTH PLACE ON PP LIST, LOSING
ANY REAL CHANGE TO BE RETURNED TO THE CITY COUNCIL. PP VOTERS IN
PRIMARY FOLLOWED PATTERN PREVIOUSLY NOTED IN IP AND SPD REYKJAVIK
PRIMARIES OF EXPRESSING DISSATISFACTION WITH CERTAIN INCUMBENTS.

2. PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PP) PRIMARY IN REYKJAVIK DREW
EXCELLENT TURNOUT OF OVER 6000 VOTERS, EQUIVALENT

TO 80 PERCENT OF PP VOTES IN REYKJAVIK DURING LAST NATIONAL ELECTION. VOTERS RANK-ORDERED LISTS OF PP CANDIDATES FOR BOTH REYKJAVIK CONSTITUENCY IN PARLIAMENT AND REYKJAVIK CITY COUNCIL AND, IN PROCESS, PROVED SOME SURPRISES FOR MOST OBSERVERS, PARTICULARLY IN RATING OF THORARINSSON. IN LAST ELECTIONS THORARINSSON AND FOREIGN MINISTER AGUSTSSON WERE IN FIRST AND SECOND PLACE RESPECTIVELY ON PP LIST AND IT HAD BEEN EXPECTED THAT, AT MOST, THEIR RESPECTIVE POSITIONS MIGHT BE REVERSED THIS TIME. AGUSTSSON EASILY WON FIRST PLACE, GARNERING ALMOST AS MANY FIRST PLACE VOTES AS NEXT TWO CONTENDERS COMBINED. NEWCOMER GUDMUNDUR G. THORARINSSON MADE SURPRISINGLY STRONG SHOWING AND PICKED UP SECOND PLACE. THORARINN THORARINSSON BARELY MANAGED TO GET THIRD SPOT ON TICKET IN VERY CLOSE RACE WITH TWO OTHER CONTENDERS. (SVERRIR BERGMANN AND KRISTJAN FRIDRIKSSON). AFTER RESULTS WERE IN, GUDMUNDUR THORARINSSON STATED TO REPORTERS THAT HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH HIS SUCCESS, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE "PARTY MACHINERY" HAD BEEN AGAINST HIM. WHEN EINER AGUSTSSON WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON THIS REMARK, HE STATED THAT HE KNEW OF NO "PARTY MACHINERY" WITHIN PP. HOWEVER, AGUSTSSON THEN IMPLIED THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS NOT PLEASED WITH GUDMUNDUR'S SUCCESS. IN LATER COMMENT, AGUSTSSON EXPRESSED HIS REGRETS OVER THE DEFEAT OF HIS COLLEAGUE THORARINN THORARINSSON.

3. IN CITY COUNCIL PRIMARY, INCUMBENT ALBERT THORSTEINSSON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 REYKJA 00126 270341Z

DROPPED FROM HIS FORMER POSITION OF SECOND ON PP LIST TO SIXTH AND AS A RESULT WILL NOT, IN ALL PROBABILITY, BE RETURNED TO CITY COUNCIL WHEN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE IN LATE SPRING. (GENERALLY ONLY THE TWO PP'S ON TOP OF LIST MANAGED TO GET ELECTED TO THE COUNCIL.) THORSTEINSSON HAD BEEN TARGET OF RATHER UNSAVORY SCANDAL TWO MONTHS AGO (REF A) AND HE ATTRIBUTED HIS LOSS DIRECTLY TO ACCUSATIONS STEMMING FROM SCANDAL. TWO YOUNG PP MEMBERS, GEDUS STEINTHORSDDOTTIR AND EIRIKUR TOMASSON, RECEIVED SUBSTANTIALLY MORE VOTES THAN THORSTEINSSON AND TOOK SECOND AND THIRD SPOTS RESPECTIVELY ON LIST.

4. COMMENT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND, TO LESSER EXTENT, INDEPENDENT PARTY IN THEIR PRIMARIES HAD ALREADY HANDED SOME SETBACKS TO OLD TIME PARTY MEMBERS (REFS B AND C). PP VOTERS APPARENTLY FELT TIME HAD COME FOR THEM TO DO LIKEWISE. THERE IS HOWEVER SOME QUESTION LOCALLY AS TO HOW WELL THE PRIMARY RESULTS FOR ANY GIVEN PARTY REALLY REPRESENT VIEWS OF PARTY FAITHFUL. IP, SDP AND PP PRIMARIES WERE ALL OPEN AND THUS MEMBERS OF THE OTHER PARTIES COULD FREELY PARTICIPATE AND THEREBY INFLUENCE OUTCOME. PRIMARY LOSERS HAVE

BLAMED THIS FACTOR FOR THEIR DEFEATS, WHILE WINNERS,
OBVIOUSLY, HAVE TENDED TO DISCOUNT EFFECTS OF THIS
SO-CALLED "CROSS OVER" VOTE.

5. IF REPORTS OF FRICTION BETWEEN AGUSTSSON AND HIS
NEW COLLEAGUE GUDMUNDUR THORARINSSON ARE TRUE, PP
FORTUNES IN IMPORTANT REYKJAVIK CONSTITUENCY WILL
NOT BE HELPED. NEVERTHELESS AGUSTSSON'S OWN POSITION WITHIN PP HAS
BEEN GIVEN SOLID BOOST BY HIS VERY STRONG SHOWING IN THE PRIMARY.
BLAKE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978REYKJA00126
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780041-0671
Format: TEL
From: REYKJAVIK
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780119/aaaaapxi.tel
Line Count: 125
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 173909e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 77 REYKJAVIK 1810, 77 REYKJAVIK 1680
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3708359
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROGRESSIVE PARTY PRIMARY RESULTS: LAST HURRAH FOR THORARIN THORARINSSON?
TAGS: PINT, IC, (THORARINSSON, THORARIN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/173909e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014